

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

No claims are amended, canceled, or added. Claims 71-88 remain pending. Applicants respectfully request reexamination and reconsideration of the application.

Claims 71-88 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious in view of US Patent No. 4,758,785 to Rath ("Rath"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 71 requires "*adjusting a shape of a surface* of a . . . [substrate]" and further states that "a first plurality of . . . *probes* is *attached to said surface*." Rath fails to teach or suggest the method of claim 71 because Rath's pads 18 (which were equated with the probes of claim 71) are not attached to any surface of film probe 16 whose shape is adjusted.

In the Office Action, Rath is described as applying a pull force to film probe 16 in the "area where 16 meets 53." Two such areas are shown in Figure 2 of Rath and are labeled points 2 and 3 in the annotated Figure 2 of Rath attached to this Response as page 8 (hereinafter referred to as "Annotated Figure 2"). The Office Action further describes Rath as applying a push force to film probe 16 in the "area where 16 meets 14," and again two such areas are shown in Figure 2 of Rath and are labeled points 1 and 4 in Annotated Figure 2. Forces applied at points 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Annotated Figure 2 will alter the shape of only two surfaces of film probe 16 shown in Annotated Figure 2: the surface of probe 16 located between points 1 and 2, and the surface of probe 16 located between points 3 and 4. (These two surfaces are colored yellow in Annotated Figure 2 and are hereinafter referred to as the "Yellow Surfaces.") The portion of probe 16 between points 2 and 3 in Annotated Figure 2 is disposed against a "non-resilient tip 53 made of a hard, clear plastic." (Rath col. 4, lines 28-30.) Hard, non-resilient tip 53 prevents the surface of probe 16 that is located between points 2 and 3 from being changed. (The surface of probe 16 located between points 2 and 3 is colored blue in Annotated Figure 2 and is hereinafter referred to as the "Blue Surface.")

The push and pull forces identified in the Office Action thus alter the shape of the Yellow Surfaces but not the Blue Surface of probe 16. The pads 18 (which were equated in the Office Action with the probes of claim 71) are disposed only on the Blue Surface of probe 16—none of the pads 18 are disposed on a Yellow Surface. Rath thus fails to meet the requirement in claim 71 that probes are attached to the surface whose shape is altered. Nor would it be obvious to move any of Rath's pads 18 to a Yellow Surface of probe 16 because, located on a Yellow Surface, pads 18 would not be able to perform their intended function of contacting wafer 79.

(See Rath col. 5, lines 29-30.) Therefore, Rath fails to teach or suggest claim 71, and the rejection of claim 71 should accordingly be withdrawn.

Claims 72-88 depend from claim 71 and are therefore also patentable over Rath. Moreover, claims 72-88 recite additional features that are not taught or suggested by Rath.

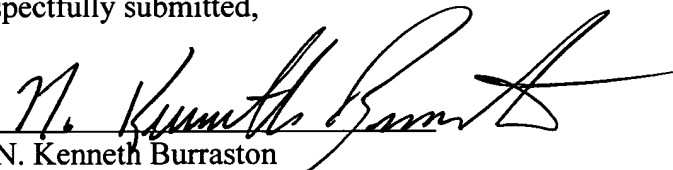
For example, claim 76 states that the shape of the first substrate is adjusted without contacting the device(s) to be tested, and claim 77 similarly states that the shape of the second substrate is adjusted without contacting the device(s) to be tested. The only method taught or suggested by Rath for changing the shape of probe 16 requires pressing the wafer 79 (which is the device to be tested in Rath) against pads 18. (See, e.g., Figure 2 of Rath.) There is therefore no teaching or suggestion in Rath of adjusting the shape of film probe 16 without contacting wafer 79, as would be required to meet the features of claims 76 and 77. Claims 76 and 77 are therefore clearly patentable over Rath.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants respectfully assert that all of the claims are in condition for allowance, Applicants therefore request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of the application. If at any time the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicants' attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (801) 323-5934.

Respectfully submitted,

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